US Army Corps
of Engineers
North Central Division

GREAT LAKES LEVELS
UPDATE NO. 53
DECEMBER 1, 1989

Rainfall in the Great Lakes basin was above average in November with all lake basins receiving greater than average total precipitation. The following table shows estimated precipitation for the month of November.

Provisional
Great Lakes Precipitation (inches)

Basin	1989*	1900-88 Average	Diff.	% of Ave.
Superior	2.8	2.5	+0.3	110%
Mich-Huron	3.3	2.7	+0.6	125%
Erie	3.5	2.8	+0.7	125%
Ontario	3.5	3.0	+0.5	115%
Great Lakes	3.2	2.7	+0.5	120%

* Estimated

The National Weather Service is forecasting average precipitation in December for all of the Great Lakes basin except the Lake Superior basin, for which above-average precipitation is forecast. December's temperature forecast is for below-average throughout the Great Lakes basin.

The water levels of Lakes Superior and Michigan-Huron are below average for this time of year, Lakes Erie and Ontario levels are above average, and Lake St. Clair is near average. All of the Lakes are continuing in their seasonal decline towards their winter lows.

From time to time these updates have reported on the International Joint Commission's Reference Study on Fluctuating Great Lakes Water Levels. One part of this study involves a large-scale survey of residential shoreline property occupants (Canadian and U.S.) on the Great Lakes, their connecting channels and the St. Lawrence River. The U.S. shoreline includes 83 counties and has been demarcated into 50 reaches for study purposes. The Corps of Engineers' Chicago District designed and is directing the U.S. side of this first-of-its-kind survey. Its aims include:

* A detailed enumeration of U.S. Great Lakes residential riparian structures. The census is currently expected to identify 60,000 to 70,000 land parcels.
* A survey of about 6,000 structure owners (or property managers) in order to obtain representative information on:
  - Historic incidences of flooding, erosion, and high and low water levels.
  - Actions taken by owners or managers in response to fluctuating water levels.
  - A range of respondent perceptions of such things as what causes water level fluctuations.
  - Data to classify respondents by age, income, etc.

Analytical results are expected to be available next summer. Further details may be obtained by writing the US Army Corps of Engineers, Chicago District, ATTN: CENCC-PD-E, 111 North Canal Street, Chicago, IL, 60606-7206, or, you may call Dr. Dave Wallin at (312) 886-6079.

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